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## **‘Community Village’ Initiative To Host Launch Party**

**Effort seeks to engender spirit of cooperation,  
volunteerism and reciprocity**

**Sparks, NV—** The Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD) is participating in Nevada’s first “community village” with a launch party this Sunday at the Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living (NNCIL).

Organized by Neighbor Network of Northern Nevada (N4), this community village seeks to bring together residents who want to help others in the spirit of both giving and receiving. N4 co-founder Amy Dewitt-Smith said the goal of this effort is to create fully inclusive programs consisting of a time bank for exchanging services, information and referral to existing community resources, meaningful social activities, and a volunteer program that will include a ride program. For example, a participant could mow someone else’s lawn and bank up two hours of time they can later cash in for something they need — say, walking their dog or simply meeting for coffee and conversation.

“This project will enable people with disabilities to not only receive needed community services in an inclusive, integrated setting but also contribute their talents back to the community,” said Kari Horn, projects manager for the GCDD.

Development of N4 started in July after being awarded a federal grant for designing a promising solution for meeting the transportation needs of people with physical and developmental disabilities, seniors, veterans, low-income families and others living in northern Nevada as a way to increase citizens’ access to health care. While the N4 project is open to all citizens, project leaders have established strategic partnerships with local aging and disability programs.

“People with disabilities and seniors are at the highest risk for isolation and poor health outcomes,” Dewitt-Smith said. “The current service system is based on deficits and dependence

where people do not know their worth, and programs often do not understand the importance of human connection. N4 isn't going to be successful because it leads people to more services. N4 is going to be successful because it leads people to people.”

Anyone interested in participating or simply learning more about N4’s community village idea is invited to NNCIL from 1 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 15, at 999 Pyramid Way in Sparks. Immunize Nevada will be on hand offering flu shots. For additional information, contact Amy Dewitt-Smith at 775-313-3210 or by email at [N4village@gmail.com](mailto:N4village@gmail.com), or visit <https://www.facebook.com/NeighborNetworkNevada>.

*Reporters: N4 co-founders Eric and Amy Dewitt-Smith will be available at the event for in-person/on-camera interviews. Also, Mark Tadder, executive director of Sierra Nevada Transportation Coalition, will be available. An informational presentation on the community village will take place from 1 to 2 p.m., followed by mingling and talking with attendees.*

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